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~~EXCISE~~

C223

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ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	H-01	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	TRSE-00	PM-10
	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	ACDA-12	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	SSE-01	PRS-01	OIG-04	P-02	T-01
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P 172108Z MAR 89
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9338
DEAHQTS WASHDC
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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DEA FOR OI

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.

() Release Excise () Deny () Declassify

Date 2/27/02 Exemption 15d

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: SNAR, PREL, PGOV, PINS, CS

SUBJECT: ODUBER ON DRUG ISSUE: ABSOLVES HIMSELF,
BLAMES USG

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.

() Classify as Extend as () Downgrade to

Date 2/27/02 Declassify on 3/11/04 Reason

1. (C) SUMMARY. FORMER PRESIDENT DANIEL ODUBER, SUMMONED BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE'S SPECIAL NARCOTICS COMMISSION, EXPLAINED AWAY HIS TIES WITH KNOWN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS AS MERE POLITICKING AND FUND-RAISING FOR THE PLN. HE PINNED COSTA RICA'S DRUG PROBLEMS ON THE USG, SPECIFICALLY THE CIA'S "TURNING A BLIND EYE" TOWARD DRUG RUNNING BY THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE. ODUBER CLAIMED TO HAVE FOUGHT THIS ACTIVITY, ADDING THAT HE HAD SENT NUMEROUS TRAFFICKERS TO JAIL BASED ON INFORMATION HE PROVIDED TO AUTHORITIES.

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END SUMMARY.

2.



3. (U) U.S. TRAFFICKER JAMES LIONEL CASEY

THE SUMMONS FOR ODUBER TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE COMMISSION (HE SKIPPED TWO SCHEDULED APPEARANCES BEFORE SHOWING UP) WAS PROMPTED BY HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH ACCUSED AMCIT TRAFFICKER JAMES LIONEL CASEY (SAN JOSE 1248). ODUBER ADMITTED THAT HE HAD KNOWN CASEY SOCIALLY SINCE 1982 OR 1983 AND THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A 20,000 DOLLAR CAMPAIGN DONATION FROM HIM FOR THE PLN'S 1986 CAMPAIGN. HE REFUSED, HOWEVER, TO PROVIDE THE COMMISSION ANY DETAILS ON THE MATTER, CLAIMING HE HAD SAID ALL HE HAD TO SAY TO THE PLN'S ETHICS COMMITTEE. THE DEPUTIES DID NOT

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PRESS FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

(THE NEXT DAY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE PLN'S ETHICS COMMITTEE, DEPUTY ANTONIO TACSAN, TOLD THE PRESS THAT ODUBER HAD INDEED GIVEN A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION OF THE CASEY DONATION TO A CLOSED SESSION OF HIS COMMITTEE ON MARCH 1.)

4. (U) JOHN HULL AND THE CIA LINKED TO DRUG TRAFFICKING

ODUBER WENT INTO GREAT DETAIL ON THIS THEME, SAYING IT WAS IMPORTANT TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF COSTA RICA'S ROLE IN THE DRUG TRADE. IN THE EARLY 1980'S, ODUBER SAID, HE HEARD THAT "THE CENTER OF ANTI-SANDINISTA ACTIVITIES IN COSTA RICA WAS THE RANCH OF JOHN HULL IN GUANACASTE." FURTHER, ODUBER SAID, THE ANTI-FSLN EFFORT WAS CLOSELY TIED TO NARCOTICS AND THE CIA. ARMS WOULD COME IN, AND DRUGS WOULD GO OUT, ODUBER CLAIMED. THE CIA, "IN ITS DESPERATION TO OVERTHROW THE SANDINISTAS CLOSED ITS EYES TO THE NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING." EVEN U.S. CUSTOMS IN THE UNITED STATES WAS SUBORNED. THE DRUG SMUGGLING CAUSED PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE CIA AND THE DEA IN COSTA RICA, BUT THE CIA WON OUT.

THE 1984 LA PENCA BOMB ATTACK ON EDEN PASTORA SHOWED THAT "IT WAS DECIDED TO KILL PASTORA BECAUSE HE WOULDN'T PLAY BALL WITH THE CIA." ODUBER CLAIMED THAT THE "FORMER CHIEF OF THE CIA HERE, JOE FERNANDEZ, IS NOW DOING EIGHT YEARS IN JAIL (SIC) FOR THESE SHAMEFUL ACTIVITIES, AND FOR HAVING LIED

TO THE U.S. CONGRESS." IN BRIEF, THE U.S. EFFORT

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	C-01	SSE-01	PRS-01	OIG-04	P-02	T-01	/064 W
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P 172108Z MAR 89
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
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SUBJECT: ODUBER ON DRUG ISSUE: ABSOLVES HIMSELF,

WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL, DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF
FERNANDEZ AND OF FORMER AMBASSADOR TAMBS, "AN
EXPERT IN DRUGS AND ARMS."

U.S. POLICY TOWARD NICARAGUA, HOWEVER, DID MUCH TO
DAMAGE COSTA RICA, ODUBER SAID. POLICE OFFICIALS
IN GUANACASTE (PROVINCE WHERE ODUBER HAS A RANCH)
WERE BRIBED; PATRIOTIC COSTA RICANS WERE SMEARED AT
THE BEHEST OF THE CIA AND THE AMERICAN EMBASSY TO
PROTECT U.S. INTERESTS. "MUDSLINGING EXPERTS" OF
THE BUSH CAMPAIGN TRIED TO BLAME THE DRUG PROBLEM
ON THE PRODUCING COUNTRIES WHEN IT WAS THE
"MIDDLEMEN" WHO WERE THE MOST DANGEROUS.

ODUBER, HOWEVER, SAID HE HAD DONE MUCH TO COMBAT

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THE CURSE OF DRUG TRAFFICKING IN GUANACASTE; HE HAD PROVIDED MANY NAMES TO THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY AND NUMEROUS CRIMINALS WERE IN JAIL BECAUSE OF WHAT HE HAD DONE. ASKED IF THE OPERATION CENTERED ON THE HULL RANCH WAS "PROTECTED" BY THE MONGE ADMINISTRATION, ODUBER REPLIED THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN, BUT IT WAS THE DRUG COMMISSION'S JOB, NOT HIS, TO FIND OUT WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE.

5. (U) NORIEGA AND U.S. POLICY

ODUBER SAID HE HAD KNOWN NORIEGA SINCE 1968, WHEN TORRIJOS INTRODUCED THEM. THE SITUATION IN PANAMA NOW, HE SAID, WAS "MORE THE FAULT OF THE UNITED STATES THAN OF NORIEGA." AFTER ALL, ODUBER SAID, "THE CIA PAID NORIEGA 200,000 DOLLARS FOR PERSONAL EXPENSES AND THE DEA WROTE HIM A LETTER THANKING HIM FOR HIS EFFORTS IN COMBATING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING." NORIEGA, IN BRIEF, WAS THE "SPOILED CHILD" OF THE CIA, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE BEGAN TO HELP IN THE ANTI-SANDINISTA STRUGGLE. AS FOR NORIEGA'S INVOLVEMENT IN DRUG TRAFFICKING, ODUBER SAID HE KNEW NOTHING OF IT.

6. (U) RELATIONS WITH FERNANDO MELO, ET AL.

ODUBER OBSERVED THAT ACCUSED TRAFFICKER MELO HAD LONG BEEN A PLN ACTIVIST AND FUND-RAISER. HE HAD BEEN HERE SINCE THE EARLY 1970'S, AND HAD HELPED ODUBER IN THE "ANTI-CASTRO STRUGGLES OF THAT TIME

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PERIOD." MELO, ACCORDING TO ODUBER, LIKED TO THROW PARTIES AND RAISE MONEY FOR "ALL THE PLN CANDIDATES THAT I CAN REMEMBER." ASKED IF HAD EVER "MADE ANY CALLS ON BEHALF OF MELO," ODUBER ADMITTED THAT HE HAD, BUT HE DID NOT RECALL TO WHOM OR FOR WHAT REASON. ODUBER SAID HE DID NOT KNOW RECENTLY-EXTRADITED TRAFFICKER ROBERTO FIONNA, BUT THAT HE HAD ACCEPTED ONE FREE MEAL IN HIS RESTAURANT -- "A MISTAKE," HE NOTED. ODUBER ALSO ADMITTED HE KNEW RICARDO UMANA (FIRED BY THE JUDICIAL POLICE FOR TIES WITH FIONNA) WHO ONCE ASKED HIM TO TALK TO SUPREME COURT JUSTICES ABOUT GETTING HIM A BETTER POSITION IN THE OIJ. ODUBER SAID HE DECLINED.

7. (U) QUESTIONS EXTRADITION FOR SUSPECTED
TRAFFICKERS

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ODUBER NOTED THAT MANY COUNTRIES WERE SEEKING EXTRADITION FROM COSTA RICA FOR SUSPECTED TRAFFICKERS LIKE CASEY AND FIONNA. NEVERTHELESS, ODUBER WONDERED ABOUT THE PROPRIETY OF A COUNTRY SEEKING EXTRADITION AFTER SOMEONE HAD BEEN IN COSTA RICA "FOUR OR FIVE YEARS, AS A GOOD FAITH INVESTOR, AND MANY OF THEM WITH COSTA RICAN WIVES, DOCTORS, LAWYERS AND THE LIKE; THE LEGISLATURE SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PRACTICE OF OTHER COUNTRIES SEEKING SUCH LATE EXTRADITION."

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~